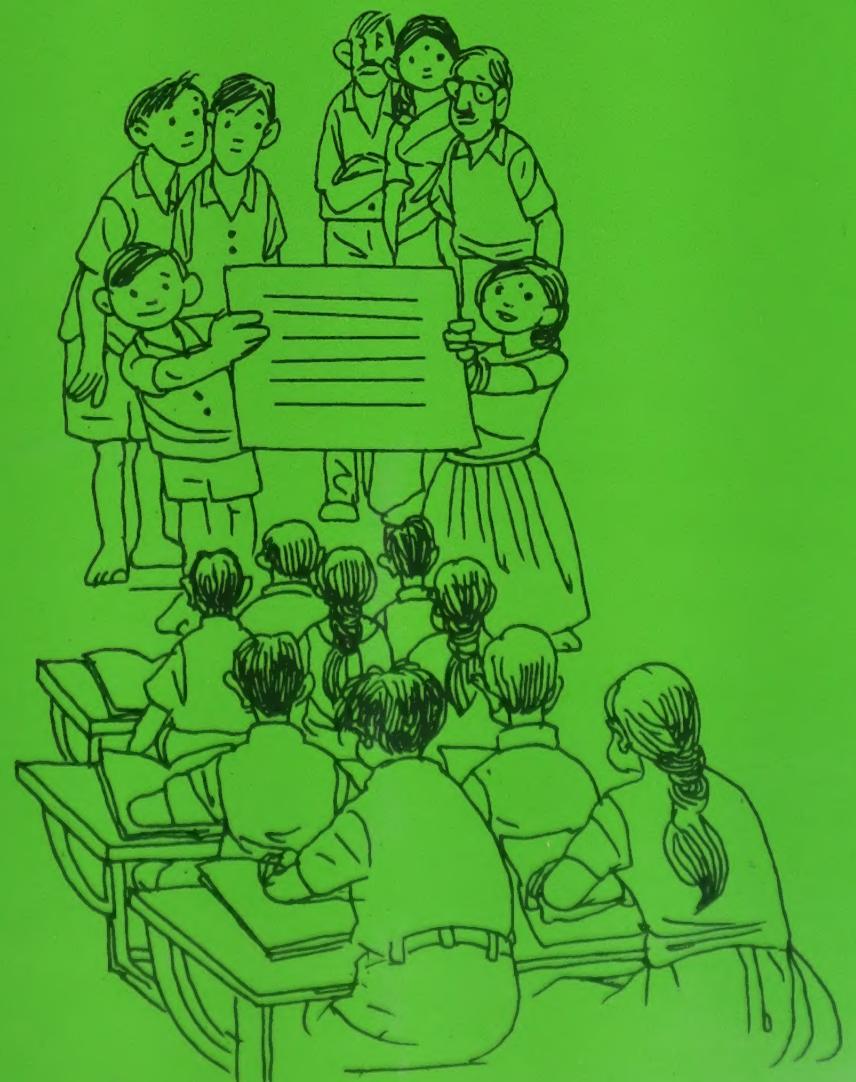


A

Unique Revolution



*Children lead the
way to decentralisation
and civil society
participation*



A Unique Revolution

First edition : 2004

Published by : The Concerned for Working Children
303/2, L.B. Shastri Nagar, Vimanapura Post
Bangalore - 560 017, India
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Website : www.workingchild.org

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e-mail : cwc@pobox.com
Website : www.workingchild.org

Price : Rs. 100/-

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Printed at :

Community Health Cell

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1st Block, Koramangala,
BANGALORE - 560 034.

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Acknowledgements

The Concerned for Working Children (CWC) would like to specially acknowledge and thank all the children from the 56 Panchayats of Kundapur Taluk, who made substantial contributions to this document and to those who facilitated this process as resource persons. Together, they have taken the first critical steps towards instituting decentralised governance at the level of the Gram Panchayat. We also thank the members of Bhima Sangha, the Makkala Panchayats and Namma Sabha who have played a major role in this process as resource persons.

We also wish to express our special thanks to *Shri. Sundar Naik, Chief Executive Officer of Udupi Zilla Parishad, Shri. Gopal Shetty, Taluk level Co-ordinator, Block Resource Center (BRC)*, the Panchayat secretaries and clerks and all other government officials whose active support made the process possible. Contributions from Panchayat adults, especially elected members who acted as resource persons and facilitators, have enriched the quality of the information and added depth to the report.

This process was initiated and facilitated by the Executive Director, Field Coordinators, Panchayat Level Co-ordinators and consultants of CWC who played a leading role in the Planning process by designing and conducting the training programmes and compiling base line information.

This Publication is based on :

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Foreword

Children lead the way to decentralisation and civil society participation

For the past few years, the Government of Karnataka has been trying to enable the participation of civil society in the formulation of plans through the vitalisation of Gram Sabhas without much success. This year participatory planning was made possible through the active involvement of children in the formulation of Five Year Plans in all the 56 Panchayats of Kundapura Taluk, Udupi District. This process was facilitated by the Concerned for Working Children (CWC).

This exercise was a journey in active participatory democracy, a practical demonstration of grass root ‘bottom up’ planning and a realisation of a citizen’s ‘right to information’ and all this with children leading the way!

In retrospect, it was found that the involvement of children, their enthusiasm, their unerring sense of justice and their compassionate response to people’s problems is what drew adults into this process. If children had not been the prime movers, adults would not have been involved in such large numbers and like in the past the task of drawing up the plans would have remained with the Secretary of the Gram Panchayat with some inputs from some of the elected members. Adults are cynical and wary of any possible change because of their conditioning to the ‘real world’, whereas children still have hope and the belief that they can change the world. Their efforts, when they bear fruit, also serves as a role model for grown ups, and adults once again begin to have hope. Children also grow up, and if they have a positive experience of participation in governance they carry that with them into adulthood. Politics is an integral aspect of our life. Good politics is essential for the progress of any country. Here children have been involved in defining ‘good politics’. This is not only a role model for children but also for adults in the entire country. The Five Year Planning process in Udupi District is one such experience.

This process however, has also raised many questions regarding the model of decentralisation we as a country have adopted; a micro replication of the centralised structures we have where the control to a large extent still remains with the State and Central Governments.

Though the legislative intention is democratic decentralisation where every individual has a say, the models of democracy available in India are centralised power centres with top-down structures. These centres of power and decision-making have decentralised their reach by constructing

sub-structures at the local level (for example, the Education Development Committees or ECDs that bypass the Gram Panchayats or Local Governments). The local level committees set up in the name of decentralisation are totally against the principles of participatory democracy. Right now various departments located far away from people take decisions about schools, child care centres, rural infrastructure and health care – without an indepth understanding of people's needs and concerns or the specifics of the local situations. The thrust is for populist schemes that will service the next election. In this model corruption and exploitation have also been decentralised and so it is understandable that women, children and marginalized communities fear decentralisation.

Though the strengthening of civil society and citizen participation are the catch phrases of democratic discourse in India, today the nature of that civil society and the object of their participation are being moulded by a specific interpretation of what it means to be a citizen in India, where civil society organisations are now seen as an extension of the state. The political situation in our country is a mockery of democracy. We criticise it without giving any thoughts to transform it.

The democracy in our country needs transformation. This transformation cannot take place overnight. The answer to this problem lies in the construction of a new definition of civil society, a highly participatory civil society filled with political content. Exploring the answers to these issues would give us a glimpse of a 'people friendly' model of globalisation that fulfils the needs of India and her people while retaining constructive political dissent and debate to hold the State accountable.

CWC has been working to strengthen participatory democracy in India ever since the 1970's. We embarked on this path with working children carrying some of the principles that were sovereign to our work with the informal sector of labour and it has led us to a vision of the 'big picture' of participatory democracy suffused with the hues of equality and egalitarianism.

The creation of politically motivated social (peoples) organisations was a primary objective and we began with working children as they were one of the most vulnerable groups in society.

When we initiated this process, we were asked, "Why do children need politics?". This question itself is a political one. If we wish to bring up our children in a democratic environment and enable them to experience democracy, they have to gain a political position, political recognition and the space for political participation and only then will we be able to create a political memory of a very high calibre.

An opportunity came our way in the form of an offer from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Udupi District to enable participatory planning in the 56 Panchayats of Kundapur

Taluk. He had witnessed the presentation of plans drawn up by the **Makkala Panchayats** (Children's Panchayats) in five of our Toofan Panchayats¹. Here, in addition to needs assessment, data collection and problem prioritisation there was also a collation of history, mapping and surveys as well as documentation of all discussions held with various groups (children, women, the disabled and other special groups). In some instances these discussions had taken place at the Ward Committee meetings.

The CEO requested CWC to facilitate a similar process in the all the Panchayats of the Taluk and we accepted the invitation. However, we had one important concern. In all the Panchayats, we insisted on not only the involvement of children, but that they played a lead role. The Panchayat Department said that they would find it difficult to facilitate this process as they had no prior experience of working with children, or of participatory planning. We (CWC) volunteered to do this and the Department agreed to coordinate the logistics and send out the relevant memos and notifications.

However, we were faced with a challenge. In the five Toofan Panchayats the children had formed base groups; the Makkala Panchayats were present; they had ownership over their information and the children had experience of preparing plans and following them up with adults supporting them. But in the remaining Panchayats, the children had no such experience or ownership. Our challenge was to empower these children to participate actively, effectively and in an informed manner by providing them the knowledge and skills to do so. The children who took part in this process were mostly in the age group of 10 –15 years.

The children, as always, surprised us. They drew inspiration from the children in the Toofan Panchayats who acted as facilitators and plunged into this exercise with great enthusiasm and carried out the process meticulously and with great rigor.

The output was amazing. The children's plans were comprehensive and substantiated with statistics and data. Groups and issues, such as the problems of the disabled, environmental concerns and issues related to mobility and transport, were covered for the first time in a five year plan. They also recorded the history of the village, degradation of resources, made maps of their Panchayats that were accurate and informative and in many cases, proposed solutions as well. The adults, especially the members and staff of the Gram Panchayats were astounded and in many cases shame-faced as the plans that the adults had drafted were very poor in comparison. As a result, by and large, the children's plans became the official plans of the Panchayats. But more than that, it has rejuvenated the Panchayats. The officials and elected representatives seem to be sensing a purpose and relevance to their work. They see their Panchayats in a new light and

¹ This is a programme of comprehensive development implemented by CWC with primary focus on the empowerment of children. It aims at enabling children to play a proactive role in decision-making and governance. Bhima Sangha, Makkala Panchayat, Namma Sabha and the respective Gram Panchayats are partners in this programme.

they have gained a deeper understanding of the Panchayat's needs and concerns. The gap between the local government and the people has diminished.

This process that the children have been involved in is not only 'developmental planning' – it is a movement for democracy at the very base, the village. This was Gandhi's vision, but the translation of this vision into practice remained a challenge. This intervention by children is an important step in that direction.

The entire planning process was in essence practising democracy, experiencing democracy and learning from it. Such processes are extremely important to build and sustain a democratic nation. The present system rarely provides such opportunities for children or adults. What we read and learn is very different from what we actually practise. Sometimes they are even contradictory. This process is an example of how democracy can and should be practised and how children can take part in decision-making processes.

Here, children were involved in taking decisions at the level of the local government. Their two significant achievements are the creation of a 'political space or forum' that they can use to present their views and concerns and the setting up of a process and structure to practice true democracy – something that until now they had only read about in books.

Local governments should be in a position to take decisions about their villages. Through this intervention they have proved that they are capable of analysing information, mapping the resources they have and deciding what they need and under what terms and conditions.

Though this process was constrained by lack of time it can evolve into a formal and replicable system that can be up scaled for the whole state. It is a good beginning. It will enable governments at higher levels to view the Gram Panchayats with more respect and as governments with geographical and political jurisdiction. The planning process that has taken place in Kundapur is an important step in this direction.

It is said that the stream of globalisation cannot be stopped. Most people, even those who oppose it, seem to believe that the present model of globalisation is here to stay and we can do little to change this. However, the Kundapur example shows that it is possible to challenge the very basis of globalisation and centralised undemocratic decision making. Such processes can be a strong counter to globalisation.

For the present model of globalisation to work, there is a need for centralised set-ups with decentralised implementation, and our present system of governance is conducive to this. Our decision-making is centralised and the local governments function like local agencies to implement these decisions. But real participatory planning processes turn this model on its head. It can question and challenge centralised decisions and make it possible for local governments to take decisions and to strengthen themselves as the representative of all the people of that Panchayat.

If there are 5000 people in a Panchayat, the local government is capable of mobilising all 5000 of them. No other government, at the state or centre, can make such a claim. The Gram Panchayats can do this. They can bring the people of the Panchayat together, discuss issues, build on experiences and challenge globalisation. Processes such as these make it possible to change the course of globalisation.

In the early days of the Panchayat Toofan programme in Kundapur, the then president of the Panchayat and the Makkala Mitra, Sri Balanna, made a demand for an Anganwadi to the Department of Women and Child Development. The representatives of the department said that they would not sanction the Anganwadi at the location suggested by the Panchayat. The president then said, *"The children and the women have asked for the Anganwadi here as it will be most convenient. I can see they are right. If you insist that the Anganwadi should be located at the place you suggest, I suggested that you leave. It is the children of our Panchayat that need it, the place belongs to us and the programme is here to serve the needs of our children. If you are not able to meet requirements we suggest you close down your three other Anganwadis as well".*

Balanna had the courage to say 'no' to programmes that were not responding to the real needs of his people only because of the active and informed participation of children and thereby the whole community. Through this he was also able to understand the real needs of children. He had the support of his people. Prior to the involvement of children and their participation in the governance of the Panchayat, he had not had the courage to question the relevance of schemes or programmes thrust on him. Now he was sure that even if the department left, he and the Panchayat would be able to run the Anganwadis because of the participation of adults and children.

The present model of globalisation can only be challenged by such people and processes. These may be small beginnings, but as they say, little streams make an ocean. The children of Kundapur Taluk have shown the way and adults have been inspired to take up the challenge to struggle for true decentralisation and participatory democracy. We have been enriched by this experience and recharged to continue pursuing our goals. The children are rearing to take this to its logical end and to get on with the implementation of the plans. We hope that you will draw sustenance from this example and find ways to take it forward.

- Nandana Reddy
- Damodar Acharya

Introduction

Recent experiments involving children's participation in Kundapur Taluk¹ have heralded a unique revolution at the grassroots and the beginning of a social restructuring process. The attempt at participatory governance has covered a total of 380,000 people (Census 2001) of which about 160,000 are children. Of them, about 20,000 children and adults have actively participated in providing information, in discussions and in Gram Sabha² meetings. The experiment has ushered in the beginnings of a new political order, which is the first of its kind in the country.

What makes this experiment revolutionary is that it has made the participation of civil society, especially of children in governance a reality. This process has made the government truly accountable to children and ushers in a child-led and child-centered planning process that may be replicated in all the Panchayats³ of the country.

All Gram Panchayats in Karnataka have just finished framing their 2002-2007 five-year plans, which will lay the foundation for the Taluk, District and State government plans. They are intended to enable Panchayats to have ownership over their own long-term developmental and infrastructural objectives.

As a part of this process, in the 56 Panchayats of Kundapur Taluk of Udupi District, children have led the democratic planning process. Perhaps for the first time, the children and the Panchayat members have been part of the development of five-year plans through a series of Ward Sabhas or meetings, leading ultimately to their approval by the Gram Sabha. This process has taken place only in Kundapur Taluk and will hopefully inspire the government to initiate similar processes in the entire State.

Showcasing the special strengths of democracy, the experiment proved that when given a chance, participation of all, self-governance and confident expression can work miracles. Even the toughest and most stubborn institutions, such as the bureaucracy and governments can be made responsive, and held accountable by active involvement of the civil society.

The political climate today is an interesting mix of channels for expression as well as plugs on dissent. While some people are allowed to expand their social space, there are others who find tyranny at every turn. But largely, the situation is a mockery of democracy, with abuse of systems and structures. In such a dismal scenario, it is essential to work not only with, but also within the government. It is important to create the awareness that self-government is the best government.

¹ An administrative division in India. A Taluk comprises of many Gram Panchayats. The Gram Panchayat is the lowest level of administration in the system of local government.

² Gram Sabha is a biannual meeting of all the voters of the Panchayat. It can be a platform for the residents to voice their problems, question and commend their elected representatives and officials of various government departments responsible for the welfare of the Panchayat.

³ The Gram Panchayat is the lowest level of administration in the system of local government. The term Panchayat refers to both the geographical and administrative units, as well as the elected body, which acts as the local council. A Panchayat is composed of a cluster of villages and several Panchayats constitute a Taluk.

Gram Panchayat Plans - The Present Situation

"What happens in the present situation is that the powerful member leads from the front and he decides, according to his wishes, what is to be given to which jurisdiction. He forgets that he is representing all the members of the Gram Panchayat. He and the other Panchayat representatives, think only about the upper classes. So that concept has to be changed and unless we change that, the underdeveloped area will remain backward & the developed area continues to get more and more developed. That is why we need to bring in a balance in the system of rural development."

-Sundar Naik, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)⁴, Zilla Parishad⁵, Udupi Panchayat, in an interview dated 18th June, 2004

A Panchayat is an important forum for people's expression. Unfortunately, a typical Panchayat plan contains only a list of requirements, funds needed and sources of income. Earlier, annual plans have been drawn up haphazardly based on incomplete and inconsistent data, prepared by the Panchayat Secretary and Clerk, both bureaucrats, without the involvement of members.

At present, in most Panchayats, the Planning process usually traces the following steps:

- ➡ Various departments relating to education and health ask government officials at the Gram Panchayat to submit their requirements. The departmental plans are then finalised at the District level. The Panchayat merely looks after bare infrastructural needs such as drinking water, roads, vented dams for small irrigation and housing requirements.
- ➡ The Panchayat Secretary and clerk, with the consent of the Panchayat President, draw up a list of demands based on little or no data to substantiate them. A study of the sources of funds, mostly disbursements from state and central schemes, gives them an idea of which requirements can be fulfilled that year and which will have to be transferred to the next year. This plan is then sent to the District Planning Committee⁶ for approval.
- ➡ The officials of the District Planning Committee review the data and often change the plans to suit their interests. They also look into allocations for special requirements and emergencies.

⁴ The Chief Executive Officer is the state government appointed administrative head of a District Panchayat.

⁵ District Panchayat - The highest level of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in India. A District Panchayat comprises of elected representatives from all Taluks of the District.

⁶ A District Planning Committee is constituted by the State government to consolidate the plans prepared by the District Panchayats, Taluk Panchayats, Gram Panchayats, [Town Panchayats], Municipal Councils and Municipal Corporations in the district and to prepare a draft development plan for the district as a whole.

Fiscal Decentralisation

The Panchayat Secretary and members feel constrained by the stringent budgetary conditionalities imposed on them by the governments. Rural local governments in Karnataka are financed primarily by conditional grants or 'schemes'. Over the years, the government has devised a plethora of schemes to define what the priorities are and when, how and by whom expenditure has to be incurred. The government divides its funding into a large number of accounts, which are further subdivided into sub-accounts on the basis of departmental boundaries, object class or even target groups⁷. Eighty per cent of the budget of the local governments is through this complicated system of 428 state and central government conditional grants to rural bodies. The Gram Panchayats receive only eight of these schemes (grants), which, together, finance about eighty per cent of Gram Panchayat expenditure.⁸ Responsibility for many central and state programmes has been passed to local governments, but discretion over the use of these funds lies with higher-level governments.

One major constraint to true fiscal decentralisation is the limited expenditure discretion given to the local governments. Almost fifty per cent of the funds are earmarked for salaries, twenty per cent for transfers to individuals, and the rest for input purchases. The funds actually controlled by local governments are less than ten per cent of the total rural spending by local bodies. The lack of independent sources of revenue and the total dependence of District Panchayats and Taluk Panchayats on transfers further adds to the woes of the Gram Panchayat.⁹

Transparency and accountability

Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and the offices that work under them are hardly people-friendly. A thick veil of secrecy hides inefficiency, arbitrariness, corruption and nepotism from public gaze. Even the process of documenting decisions has deteriorated considerably. For instance, arbitrary decision-making at the local level does not get reflected in the records. Nor do the records show how the

⁷ Report of the Working Group on Decentralisation constituted by the Government of Karnataka in 2002. T.R. Raghunandan, Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department is the Convenor.

^{8,9} World Bank Report on Fiscal Decentralisation to Rural Governments, Volume I-Main Report, January 2004



decisions are made, whether various options and possibilities are analysed or not and on what criteria priorities are drawn up.

Decentralised planning?

In all the Panchayats the lack of a system for participatory planning is the most glaring feature. The process at the Taluk and village levels is of poor quality and neither does, nor is geared to reflect the people's aspirations. Every year, by April or May, Gram Panchayats prepare action plans relating to funds earmarked under the Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) and the 10th Finance Commission. But the needs and problems of the poor are not captured so Panchayats undertake identification and prioritisation of needs. If funds are inadequate the plans normally spill over on pending work.¹⁰

Hopefully, such planning exercises can unlock the potential of local democratic governance. To enhance decentralisation, pressure has to be applied on the State government, from the bottom as well as the top. While Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) should continue to push the government, the main thrust has to come from the people. Only their demand for accountability and participation can awaken the huge sleeping giant of the government.

It is essential that there is active and sustained participation of the civil society in governance to ensure a holistic and vibrant society. It is vital that the beneficiaries of civil governance are also its drivers. So, it is equally important that children are recognised as an important part of the civil society and their participation in governance is facilitated and nurtured.

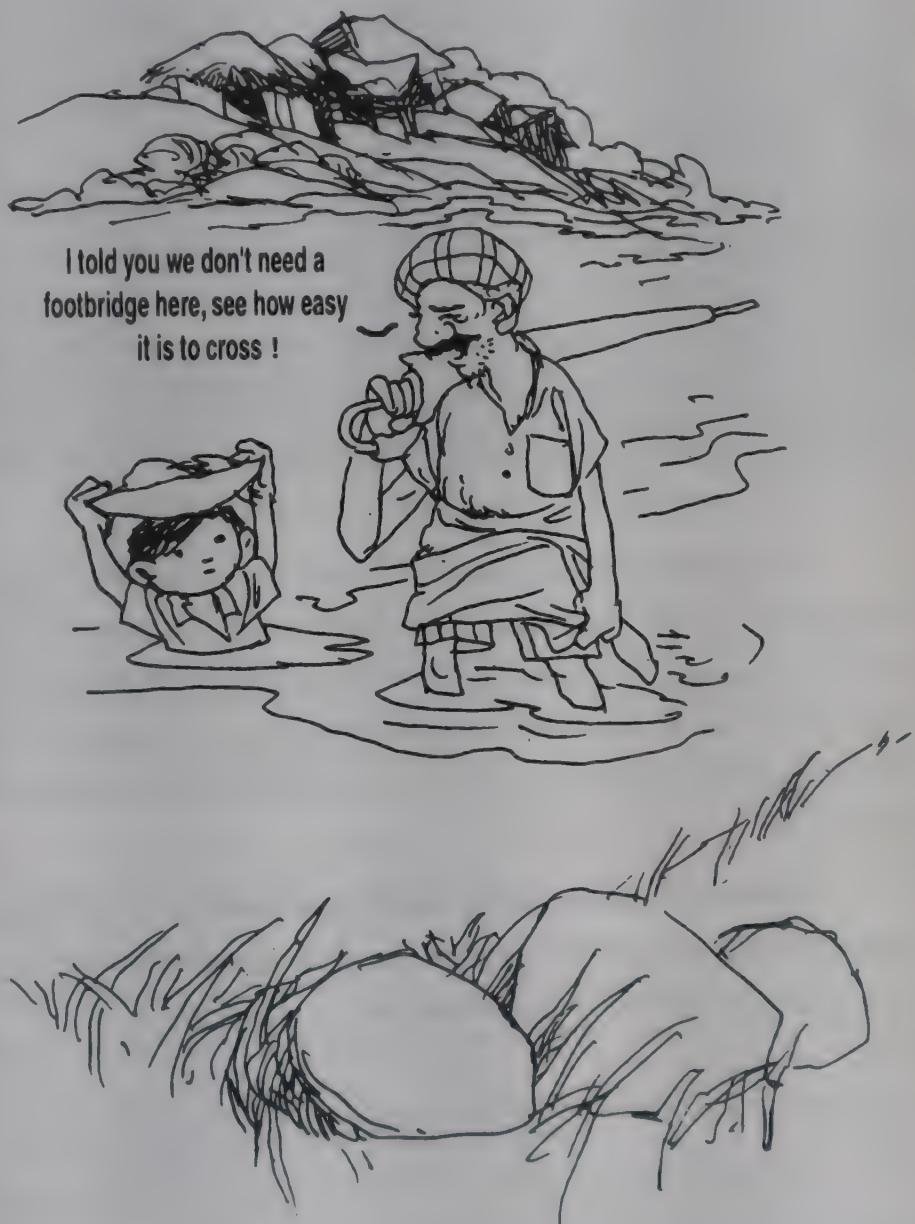
¹⁰ Report of the Working Group on Decentralisation constituted by the Government of Karnataka in 2002. T.R. Raghunandan, Secretary, Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Department is the Convenor.

Children's Right to Participate

By and large today, children are passive recipients of adult benevolence on the one hand or victims of adult exploitation and abuse on the other. It is not even considered necessary for children to be empowered to balance the scales of power that adults hold. Their rights to organise, participate and act as protagonists are continually belittled and questioned. And now with the institutions of capitalist globalisation such as the IMF, WTO and WB growing stronger and pervading every nook and cranny of public and personal lives, the marginalised are spiraling downwards into even deeper depths of penury and desperation, while children have been relegated to the fringes.¹¹

Globalisation is slowly changing the nature of land use and agriculture, and degrading the rich biodiversity of our planet. While basic services such as education, energy, water, transport and telecommunications are getting privatised, people's participation in the administration of public resources such as forests, land, air, water, fuel, manure and forest produce is getting weakened. The resultant increase in urban poverty and the displacement of the poor has finally made children the most vulnerable section in this global war for ultimate resource control.

Today, in the name of setting 'global economic



¹¹ Children and the New world – Nandana Reddy, 2004

standards' the new Capitalist imperialism is forcing new terms and conditions on developing countries. Due to the accelerating and cut-throat competition in the world market, welfare of people is no longer a state priority.

To follow the rules of the new game, countries such as India have had to do away with a large number of safety nets for the marginalised. Our countries have reduced the subsidies they offer to the poor, cut down the subsidies for farmers, artisans, and small-scale industries. All service sectors like health, education, transportation are getting privatised. Through such measures, we are dismantling our social protection mechanisms and the needy are becoming increasingly vulnerable. The setting of global standards has actually resulted in further marginalisation of children and their communities. The services that were provided earlier by the State now have to be paid for. This increases the pressure on families that are already burdened by the lack of employment. One of the immediate outcomes of this is that an increased number of children are pushed into exploitative work situations.

This social insecurity is also aggravated due to acute unemployment of adults. As a result of global standards, traditional employment sectors are no longer viable. Children of these communities are doubly affected. On the one hand their families are on the brink of pauperisation. On the other, the education that is within their reach is sub-standard. They are not in a position to 'pay' to private institutions. Their economic situations force them to work, yet, because child labour is banned, they seek work in sectors which are invisible. They find themselves in jobs that are even more harmful and exploitative than ever before.¹²

To counter the no-win situation in which they find themselves, children need to be involved in the greater systems of governance. Participation goes beyond the civic and political; it is about people engaging in every aspect of the world. Children's participation is more than just allowing a child to express an opinion at a conference or on a specific developmental project. It is about providing space for children to be active within the family, school, community or other frameworks of life.

Children are better able to identify the needs and challenges that provide inputs for policy making. Their participation is a process through which they can influence and exercise control over initiatives, decisions and resources.¹³

¹² Children and Social Security, M.M. Ganapathi, 2004

¹³ United Nations, "Youth Participation Manual" 1997-2001 (Retrieved March 13, 2003)

Enabling children to participate meaningfully can help them to develop confidence and acquire a sense of belonging. In a supportive environment, they have the capacity to positively impact and provide meaningful insight into the development of communities.¹⁴

Why children should be heard

Box 1

- Children have problems that adults cannot perceive. For instance, in Keradi Panchayat¹⁵, there was a small patch that had to be waded through. It was not a problem for adults, but would submerge children neck-deep. The children asked for a footbridge, while the adults did not even consider it.
- Involving children would ensure that they grow up to become more informed and empowered, as well as accommodative, tolerant adults who respect various opinions and build a society that is more democratic, participatory, non-discriminatory and fair.
- It has been noticed that Makkala Panchayats¹⁶, Bhima Sangha¹⁷ and Namma Sabha¹⁸ have had a positive impact on the ethics of the local government, making it more transparent, democratic and participatory. Children can make a difference even in very patriarchal, paternalistic, feudal, violent and corrupt situations. For instance, Unchengamma's struggle against child marriage in Hollagundi, the banning of arrack (alcohol) in N. Seeranhalli, the replacement of the Doctor at the local Primary Health Centre, the just disbursement of housing loans and increased focus on child-related expenditure. The result is a humanisation of adults and the injection of ethics in governance. Far from having got influenced by adults, children have improved adult behaviour.¹⁹

¹⁴ Children and the New World, Nandana Reddy, 2004

¹⁵ Keradi Panchayat in Kundapur is one of the Panchayats in which CWC's Toofan Programme is implemented. See footnote 21 for a description of the Toofan Panchayat Programme.

¹⁶ A children's Village Council or parallel government of children, set up in Karnataka jointly by Bhima Sangha and the Concerned for Working Children. It is a forum for all children to participate in decision-making and governance at the Panchayat level.

¹⁷ A union of, by and for working children in Karnataka facilitated by the Concerned for Working Children, with a membership of over 13,000, striving for the realisation of child rights

¹⁸ An association of youth, composed of artisans, crafts persons and others engaged in various occupations, founded by ex-Bhima Sangha members.

¹⁹ A Journey in Children's Participation, Nandana Reddy and Kavita Ratna, 2002

The Evolution of the Planning Process

The idea of conducting this innovative experiment in decentralised planning germinated at the Kundapur Task force²⁰ meeting organised by the Concerned for Working Children (CWC). Children of five Toofan²¹ Panchayats presented their demands to a diverse group including their local Panchayat members and Taluk and State level Government officials. The CEO of Udupi Zilla Parishad was present. Both startled and impressed by the children's forceful presentations, he requested CWC to facilitate the ongoing state government mandated planning exercise in the seven Toofan Panchayats in Kundapur.

CWC assisted the members of the Makkala Panchayats and the Gram Panchayat members along with the community members of the Alur, Belve, Balkur, Keradi, Hombadi Mandadi and Hattiangadi Panchayats to frame comprehensive, fairly representative plans for their Panchayats. A series of consultative and focussed discussions with the different groups of the Panchayat was organised by the Panchayat and facilitated by CWC and Bhima Sangha. The CEO was very appreciative of the outcome of the participatory planning process in the Toofan Panchayats. Hence, he requested CWC to facilitate a similar planning process in the remaining 49 Panchayats of the Taluk.

The Concerned for Working Children (CWC) is a two-decade-old secular and democratic development agency committed to the empowerment of children, especially working and marginalised children and their communities through active participation in decision making and governance on all matters that concern them. CWC presently implements its programmes in one urban and four rural districts of Karnataka. It has been able to successfully declare areas 'child labour free' and 'child rights friendly' as a result of time-bound intervention of three to five years.

CWC willingly took up the responsibility – with a demand that 'children should lead the planning process'. The CEO, having experienced first-hand the enormous contribution of children in the plans prepared in the Toofan Panchayats, accepted the demand and extended total support of the department for children's participation. The complete responsibility to facilitate children's participation was taken on by CWC.

Of the seven Panchayats, Alur Panchayat's²² plan structure was most comprehensive. (See Page 41 for the structure of the Alur plan). The CEO adopted the well-laid out and exhaustive

²⁰ A tripartite body, devised by CWC, comprising of children's representatives; government officials and elected representatives; and community based organisations. This body was set up link the Makkala Panchayat with the Gram Panchayat and focuses primarily on issues related to children that are raised by the Makkala Panchayat.

²¹ This is a programme of comprehensive development implemented by CWC with primary focus on the empowerment of children. It aims at enabling children to play a proactive role in decision-making and governance. Bhima Sangha, Makkala Panchayat, Namma Sabha and the respective Gram Panchayats are partners in this programme.

²² Alur Panchayat is one of the Panchayats of Kundapur Taluk. It is also a Toofan Panchayat. See Annexure 1 for a complete list of all 56 Panchayats of the Taluk.

structure of the Alur Plan as the framework of an ideal plan. He suggested that the other Panchayats in the Taluk should develop their plans within a similar framework.

CWC's involvement in the planning process took place in three different phases :

I Phase - The Kundapur Task Force meeting was organised by CWC. At this meeting the children of five Toofan Panchayats presented their demands. The CEO of Udupi Zilla Parishad was present.

II Phase - Impressed by the presentations at the Task Force meeting, the CEO requested CWC to facilitate an extensive survey exercise in the seven Toofan Panchayats in Kundapur. The survey exercise was successful and led to a decision by the CEO to involve CWC in the official planning process that was already underway. CWC agreed to do this in the seven Toofan Panchayats.

III Phase - Pleased with the results of the planning process in the Toofan Panchayats, the CEO requested CWC to facilitate a similar process in the remaining 49 Panchayats of the Taluk.

In 2004, children from 56 Panchayats of Kundapur Taluk, in the 10 to 15 year age bracket, were trained by CWC on collection, collation and analysis of data. Having gathered information through painstaking research and discussion, the children compared notes on problems and possible solutions. They gave foundation to their demands with the data they had compiled. Initially they documented the issues and then drew up revised lists. Lacunae in the data were made up with further inputs from the Panchayat office's data.

In all these Panchayats, adults too were motivated to contribute to the process. A special meeting (Vishesh Sabha) was convened for them.

In some Panchayats, the children participated in Ward Sabhas to discuss the five-year plan and share their own plans. A few points mooted by them overlapped with those thrown up by adults, but most suggestions listed by them were unique.

The attitude of adults towards the children was singularly laced with a mix of respect and bewilderment. For perhaps the first time, children were looked upon as active participants in the developmental activities of the Panchayat, as citizens of the community with pertinent problems and issues that concerned not only them but the entire community.

Interestingly, the children threw up issues not only on education, perceived by most to be their chief concern, but also 'adult' problems such as those pertaining to drinking water, fuel, street lights, etc—areas which are as much the concern of adults as of children. At the Gram Sabhas, adults witnessed, with astonishment, that children came up to read out their problems in front of the entire body, an act they had not thought any child, much less children they had known, capable of performing. However, their demands were endorsed and partially or fully formed part of the final plan.

Some case-studies

In the **Kavrady Panchayat** Gram Sabha, elders were impressed by the finely drawn-out plan and consultative process of the children's document. Their own plan, in contrast, fell short of such detail and thoroughness. Accordingly they requested an extension of the deadline by three days to finalise their list so that they could consult other community members.

In **Haladi Panchayat**, the final plan document is composed almost entirely of children's demands. The adults had shirked on their part of planning and therefore totally included the children's suggestions—just a fraction being their own!

Expressing appreciation for their presentation, the Vice-President of the **Yadtore Panchayat** Gram Sabha invited the children to visit his office every week to update him on their problems, with the assurance that their problems would be addressed seriously and at the earliest. Thus, when the children pointed out that streetlights were faulty in many areas, the Vice President offered to get them repaired if they would turn in the pole numbers to his office.

Following are a few detailed case studies that highlight issues related to the dynamics of the planning process, some of the responses within the communities and the outcome of the process.

(Please refer to Page 37 for details of the planning process)

Hosangadi Panchayat Gram Sabha

Here is an account of the first Gram Sabha meet of Hosangadi Panchayat this year.

About a 100 persons were crowded in a room that did not even have enough chairs to accommodate all. Local women Self Help Groups (SHGs), Anganwadi²³ teachers, farmers, villagers... there seemed to be as many women as men. All the Panchayat members, from the President, Vice President to various Taluk officials from various departments sat facing the people they represented. One feature that marked this meeting out from similar other meets as being truly representative was the presence of 10 school children, waiting a little restlessly for their turn to speak.

The meeting opened with the reading out of the accounts of the Panchayat -the sources of income and expenditure. Next, on being invited by the Secretary, a 12-year-old girl strode up to the podium. She clutched a bunch of papers that had demands painstakingly compiled by many schoolchildren and various problems listed ward wise. Any data found insufficient had been immediately pulled out from the Panchayat office and entered into the list. Loudly, clearly, in front of the whole Panchayat, teachers, parents and other adults, she read out her demands.

²³ A day care center for children in the age group of 0-6.

They included not only issues about children and their schools, but also problems plaguing the entire community. Apparently, these children clearly understood that the solutions to many of their problems lay in solving fundamental problems relating to provision of services such as water, electricity and roads. They asked for compound walls, playgrounds and computers for schools and water and electricity for their homes. The adults present, both bewildered and amused, listened intently. No questions were asked and all the demands were accepted by the Gram Sabha participants.

Next came the reading of the minutes of the Ward Sabha meetings—a run up to the Gram Sabha—held 15 days earlier. The Ward Sabha members had discussed the five-year planning process, a list of demands, including those of the children's. The final list was to be submitted to the District Planning Committee for approval.

Representatives from the various State departments presented their annual achievements, followed by heated discussions, prickly questions, and counter arguments.

An issue that raised a storm was brought up by dalits. Special facilities and schemes were not reaching them.

Many questions were directed at the Anganwadi supervisor on the facilities available for children below six. “*How many children were enrolled in the Anganwadis?*”, “*How much food was doled out and how good was it?*”. Incidentally, at that time, the Anganwadi workers in Udupi District were protesting against the decision of the Department of Women and Child Development requiring them to report to the Gram Panchayat instead of the Department. The protest was seen by most as the workers resisting decentralisation due to the increased accountability that would be imposed on them if their performance was subjected to Panchayat scrutiny.

The village accountant almost pleaded with the people to register births and deaths. This, he said, would ensure that every child would be able to avail of the benefits accruing from a birth certificate and would give an accurate count of the population of each Panchayat.

Another contentious issue was the Below Poverty Line cards, which most claimed had been purloined by the rich. Farmers demanded information on the latest agricultural techniques, trends and implements. The Raithri Sampark Kendra (Farmer's Communication Center) officer of Vandse Hobli²⁴ spoke of the regular workshops in his department to disseminate such information to farmers and gave out the farmer's helpline number, 1551.

Interestingly, the children had already raised many of the adult concerns. But the biggest problem perceived was that a lot of funds had been sanctioned but had not reached the target group in full or in time, due to widespread corruption and red tape.

Thus, the meeting ended with the final approval of the five year plan.

²⁴ The administrative jurisdiction of a revenue authority.

Kirimanjeshwara Panchayat

"You create problems where there are none."

Irate residents of the Panchayat hurled accusations and voiced their suspicions of civil society organisations at an orientation meeting organised by CWC. They used the meeting as a platform to vent their frustrations over the apparent complacency, inaction and lack of concern

of Panchayat members towards residents of the Panchayat. Yashodha Shetty, the CWC Panchayat Level Co-ordinator (PLC), who was leading the discussion, struggled to pacify the crowd. She was unused to such cynical jokes and questions about CWC's intentions, as CWC usually developed long-standing relationships not only with children but with all dominant sections of the community.



In Kirimanjeshwara, not only was the community unaware of CWC's work, it was very suspicious of the intentions of the Panchayat members. The Panchayat Secretary could neither address nor control the outbursts, though he had received training from CWC. There were no children at the meeting, for the Panchayat

President had not requested schoolteachers to bring children.

The seething resentment of some residents at the lack of desired decentralisation was also palpable. For instance, many residents asked: "*What is the use of having this meeting without the presence of the Taluk Panchayat and District Panchayat members?*"

School teachers proved quite resistant to the idea of children's participation, they were confident that they could understand the problems of children quite well. Teachers also expressed their dissatisfaction at the schooling system. "*We teachers have problems as well, why do you only consider the children's problems?*"

After the commotion stirred mostly by a few loud and dissatisfied persons, the meeting was brought to an abrupt halt by the Resource Team. It was clear that the group was too distracted by bigger issues that needed to be resolved first. So it proceeded to meet the children.

Ironically, the teacher who had vehemently opposed the notion of child participation that disastrous morning was present at the school the team visited later! Initially, he was still belligerent.

But when Damodar Acharya went to the school and was welcomed by his friend, the headmaster, the teacher suddenly capitulated and offered assistance!

The children were divided into ward-wise groups. One of the problems they brought up was that of drinking water. Earlier, at a special meeting, a teacher had said that they had no drinking water problem. The children challenged the claim with the observation that as teachers brought water in bottles from their homes, they did not know how much the water from their well stank.

The children were advised to collect data in the following two days, and hand it over to the teacher, who would in turn give it to the Panchayat office.

Two days later, the team found that the children had not been able to collect data as the teachers had not allowed them to venture out during school hours, while parents prevented them from doing so after school. The Resource Team went back to Kirimangeshwara, visited all the government schools and re-trained the students.

Kirimangeshwara was a good example of everything that could go wrong in a process like this. Internal politics seemed to dominate the proceedings of every meeting. The Gram Sabha was convened to discuss the five-year plan but it disintegrated into yet another Panchayat and administration-bashing session! Children were not invited so none of their problems were highlighted.

The main source of discontent was that all the Panchayat and many Taluk and District Panchayat members. Additionally it irked people that the Panchayat did not put up notices to publicise important information.

At Kirimangeshwara, the issues brought up related to the faulty distribution of the Below Poverty Line cards, dissatisfaction with Anganwadi facilities and health issues. Indeed, these issues came up in other Gram Sabhas as well. But there, atleast some discussions regarding the five year plan had ensued. The Kirimangeshwara meeting closed without any substantive decisions being taken or concrete follow-up plans or agenda.

The Children's Plans

The children's plans are expressed in simple, crisp sentences, rich in data and laden with purpose:

- Education and school-related issues recur in all the plans. Examples, compound walls, libraries, high school inaccessibility, school playground, toilets, midday meals and teachers.



A sampling of school-centric issues

[Reproduced from the children's plans]

Problem	Supporting Information	Proposed Solution
Paduvari Panchayat		
Compound Wall for school	The school is on the banks of a river. Every year during the rainy season, the walls get wet, due to which they collapse. This is very dangerous for the students and invokes fear in them as well.	A permanent structure, 200 meters long, should be constructed.

Chitoor Panchayat		
Midday meals should be introduced for 6th and 7th standard students	In two Primary schools of Hosur, only students upto the 5th standard can avail of the midday meal facility sponsored by the government. Due to this, the 6th and 7th standard students feel neglected.	The government must extend the midday meal scheme to the 6th and 7th standard students as well.
Kalavara Panchayat		
Physical Education (P.E.) Teachers	In Kalavara Higher Primary school, there is not a single P.E. teacher for about 300 children.	P.E. teachers must be appointed as soon as possible.
Keduru Panchayat		
School toilets	In Ultoor Mahalingeshwara Private Higher Primary school, around 260 children suffer from want of a toilet. This problem is particularly acute for girls.	Toilets must be built immediately.
Kirimanjeshwara Panchayat		
Lack of rooms in the school	In the Urdu Higher Primary school of the Panchayat there are only four classrooms for seven classes. It is a problem to study when three classes are conducted in the same hall.	More classrooms must be built.
Kumbashi Panchayat		
Library	There is no library in Kumbashi Panchayat. Schoolchildren are thus forced to buy all the books they need. This is a great problem for them.	A library needs to be built.

Herur Panchayat		
High School	In Yadakanta, Mekodu, Noojadi and Yerukonu villages, there is no high school. So about 500 children have to go to a high school in Kambada Konay, which is more than 8 kms away.	There should be at least one high school in these areas.

- Basic infrastructure and facilities denied to children and adults figure prominently in all the plans. Children have also addressed adult-only problems. For example in the Kergal Panchayat, they asked for fertilisers and seeds at subsidised rates. In Kalavara Panchayat, they listed the construction of a community hall as an urgent requirement, mainly for ten women's Self Help Groups. Children have understood that without basic services such as drinking water, food, Anganwadi and fuel, they would be forced to leave school.

A sampling of infrastructure-related obstacles to attending school

[Reproduced from the children's plans]

Problem	Supporting Information	Proposed Solution
Bijur Panchayat		
Anganwadi	Approximately 30 houses don't have access to an Anganwadi within a walkable distance. Due to this, older children leave school in order to take care of younger siblings	An Anganwadi should be sanctioned for this area urgently.
Drinking water	15 families in Kanchikan and Hadnakeri have severe drinking water problem. Children have to go very far to fetch water and this task makes it difficult for them to go to school. Many children also find it difficult to reach school on time.	Taps should be provided in these areas.

Hallihole Panchayat		
Footbridge	About 100-150 children of Moodihathlu area find it difficult to walk to school in the monsoons. They are not able to cross the river.	A 35-foot-long footbridge should be built.
Ajri Panchayat		
Streetlights	As woods surround Ajri Village, it is difficult to venture out in the dark. Not only is there a fear of wild animals, but even the roads are in a bad state due to the slush in the potholes and that walking here is dangerous. We have to hurry home from school especially when there are extra activities on special days.	It is necessary to arrange for streetlights.

- Children endure the effects of being denied basic services, which hamper their development and growth.

A sampling of infrastructure-related problems that affect both adults and children

[Reproduced from the children's plans]

Problem	Supporting Information	Proposed Solution
Hengavalli Panchayat		
Hospital	The people of 763 houses in the Hengavalli village have to travel 10 kms to Belve or Amasyabailu hospitals when sick. Also, transport facilities are inadequate.	A Primary Health Centre is needed in the village.
Kergal Panchayat		
Yellow ration card holders	Ration cards are due to 30 families in Hoskodi.	Yellow ration cards should be provided to them immediately.

Jadkal Panchayat		
Drinking water	In Belkal School, Muduru Kolake, Basri Beru areas, 80 families have to walk nearly four Kms to fetch water.	A dam should be constructed over Kolake river. With an electric motor, water should be transported to the village. The water from this pipeline should then be collected in the water tank, and accessed by the villagers through a tap.
Golihole Panchayat		
Telephone	In the areas of Yelajith, Jannadimalli and Hadagikeri there is not a single phone. This problem affects 400 families, members of which have to walk 12 Kms to access the nearest phone.	It is imperative for all houses to have a telephone.
Kalavara Panchayat		
Desilting the river	The area between the Kalavara bridge and the railway bridge gets logged by mud. This stops the flow of water, so agricultural land in the surrounding areas suffer due to lack of water for irrigation.	The mud should be removed.
Trasi Panchayat		
Veterinary hospital	Trasi Panchayat does not have a single veterinary hospital. There is a milk dairy here and many houses have cattle as well. When the animals fall sick, they are treated at Gujadi or Kundapur.	A veterinary hospital is needed urgently.

- Alcoholism is a recurrent issue in most plans. In Golihole Panchayat, a sadly common experience was that of fathers beating mothers in a drunken stupor and traumatising children. In Hengavalli Panchayat, children attributed squandering on liquor as one of the causes of poverty, the solution suggested by the children was that all liquor shops should be closed down.



- An almost universal demand is for a platform for children to voice problems and to communicate and discuss issues with peers. For example in Tallur Panchayat, children reasoned that to voice their problems, they needed a Makkala Panchayat.
- The demand for a Makkala Mitra²⁵ is also echoed in many plans, presumably because CWC's Resource Team informed children about the possibility of having an adult play such a role. In Beejadi Panchayat, children demanded for a Makkala Mitra because they strongly felt that children should share their problems with empathetic adults.
- The need for Children's Post boxes (Makkala Anche Pettige) for children to write about their views and problems is felt across many Panchayats. This facility is viewed as an essential mode of communication among children.

- In Ajri Panchayat, a girl in Ajri Mananje School expressed her desire to study further. She wrote, "I have not seen my father. I do not know who he is. My mother finds it very difficult to lead a comfortable life. My old grandparents take care of me. Therefore, I will not be able to continue schooling. I would like to study. So please help me. Yours sincerely, a friend, XXX."

²⁵ A children's friend or ombudsman, an adult chosen by children to provide support and assistance to children in crisis or difficulties

- In two plans, the problems of backward communities were addressed, specifically those relating to burial spaces for the dead. In Kavrady Panchayat, the burial grounds given to a backward community had no walls. The children asked the Panchayat to build walls with laterite stones around the land. In Jadkal Panchayat, they asked for a graveyard for the backward community.

The plans made by the children, through dissuasions and consultations with their peers and adults wherever possible, clearly demonstrated the clarity that the children possessed on atleast some of the causes of a particular problem. For example, in Kumbashi Panchayat, children knew that it was because two private pump sets had been illegally installed that water did not flow from their taps, which meant that they had some understanding of the effects of the degradation of ground water resources. The specifics of a problem, such as, for example, how many houses were affected, and suggestions to mitigate them, were detailed and lucid. Their proposals reflected the body of knowledge that they have acquired through attentive listening and questioning.

However, there were a few drawbacks in the plans, which are now being attended to:

- Issues of disabled and working children did not find sufficient mention, except in two plans. This oversight would not have occurred had a representative group of children, including working and disabled children, been involved in planning in larger numbers than they did. In Herur Panchayat, concern was

expressed for two children with speech impairment. In Kandlur Panchayat, children mentioned financial difficulties faced by a family with five visually impaired members. They urgently implored the Panchayat to see that at least one family member received disability pension. In Bijur Panchayat, some working children said, “*We don’t get proper salaries and they don’t let us go home until we finish the work. All day we have to work and wash cups and vessels. We get rashes on our skin. If we don’t get up early in the morning they pour hot water into our ears to wake us up.*” The solution they offered was: “*We have to get proper wages and they have to show some love. We need proper security and protection.*”

However, on the insistence of the Resource team, the Panchayat office of many Panchayats did, some time later, compile a list of disabled people residing in their Panchayat and added that to their plans.

► The school-centered demands related mostly to infrastructural drawbacks. The children dwelt mostly on the shortage of teachers and not on the quality of teaching, either because they were afraid of criticising the systemic flaws of the schooling system or because they did not recognise them as flaws. Also, while almost all children asked for a platform to voice their problems, not one of them demanded participation in the school administration and monitoring processes.

Some of the gaps in the secondary data had to be plugged by the Resource Team with data from the Panchayat office. It is clear that the children involved needed to be trained to conduct periodic Participatory Rapid Appraisals. Structures to enable children to discuss and debate issues of common and specific interest also needed to be in place.

Information Passbook

In the Alur Panchayat Plan, one of the interesting demands made by the adults and children is for an information passbook. They exhort that every household in the Panchayat must have a n information passbook, in which the details of every member of the family must be entered. These passbooks would, collectively, serve as a useful source of information for the whole Panchayat.

The final outcome

In most Panchayats, the children's inputs were accepted in the final plans, sometimes in their exact words. The demands were prioritised year wise by the Panchayat Secretary and the funds required to implement them were estimated. The final plans, consisting of both adult and children's demands, have been reviewed once at the Gram Sabhas and will be sent to the District Planning Committee for approval.

Ironically, while the 2002-2007 Tenth five-year plans were being drawn up at the Panchayat level in 2004, the Tenth five-year plan at the State level had already been drafted in 2002. The State government belatedly decided, two years after the five-year plan period had commenced, that Gram Panchayats should draft their own five-year plans!

It is not clear how the State plan will be altered to accommodate their requirements. But the final document, with updates and additions, will be an effective lobbying tool for the Panchayats. The process of developing it will ensure that they expect a similar participatory approach for all programmes.

In almost all Panchayats, the participation of children exceeded that of the adults. Indeed that factor provoked some adults to play a more active role. But the process could not sufficiently engage all individuals as well as a few community-based organisations such as women SHGs, youth and farmers' groups.

Ironically, it was only when children got involved did a few adults realise that if they just accepted the existing situation of disempowerment, they would be left behind. Approximately 380,000 (Census, 2001) adults and children in Kundapur Taluk were reached, either directly through the training programme or indirectly through word of mouth. At the very least, they became aware of such a plan and of the relevance of such participation.

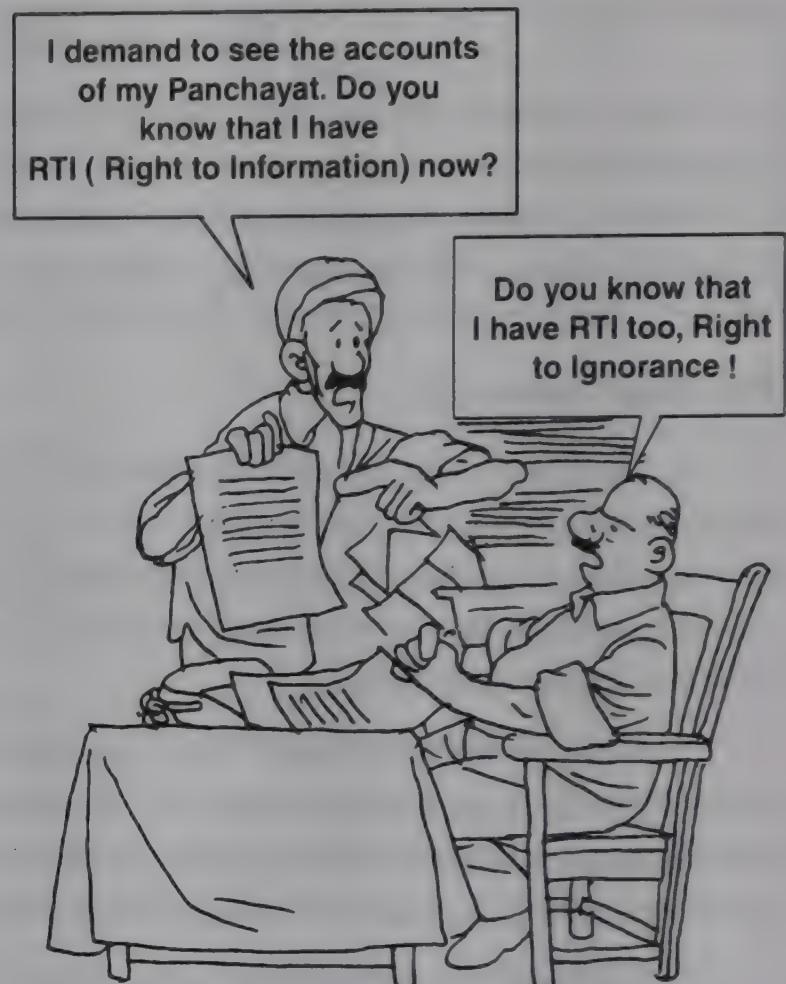
The children and adults of each Panchayat have held a mirror to the successes and failures of government programmes and put forth suggestions on how each of the government's departments can become more realistic, viable and efficient. In very simple, straightforward terms they have explained what the government needs to do in order to reach the people optimally.

Comparing Plans

Comparing the old plans with the new ones in the 56 Panchayats, major differences are evident. One difference was the duration. Previous plans lasted for one year, this one will last for five. This allowed the Panchayat to prioritise demands based on the availability of funds and the urgency of the requirement. It also enabled the Panchayat to carry forward the implementation of a particular plan to the next year or two if the urgency for such an action was mitigated by changing circumstances.

Another major difference was the process. Earlier, the plans would be hijacked by members or powerful individuals with the right connections to improve their own lives, people's participation being a mere catchword. Lip service to participation and people's power was useful only during elections! The newly drafted plan was built up through regular ward meetings and data collection by women, children and entire Panchayats. For the first time, the Panchayat felt as if it owned the plan.

The amount of data contained in the new plan is also strikingly abundant. Earlier, the demand would be unsubstantiated, for example, a new school would be proposed without data on how many children needed it or where it should be located. On its way up to the District Planning Committee, the plan would be tinkered with. This went against the very grain of the 73rd Amendment, which attempts to decentralise Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), and considers self-planning to be an important tool.



Resources expended

Considering the scale and the impact of this process, the resources expended towards it were significantly low. The Panchayats reimbursed the traveling expenses of the Resource persons. (Seven Resource teams were constituted by CWC to impart training to the children of the 56 Panchayats). The Resource Teams had to pay for their lunches in most Panchayats, though at some places lunch was either sponsored by the Panchayat or arranged for all the participants of the training programme. The expenses of the Training of Trainers (TOT) programme, which was conducted to train the Resource teams, were borne solely by CWC. (See Page 42 for details of the TOT Programme).

In terms of human resources, there were seven CWC employees and senior management personnel such as Damodar Acharya, Venkatesh, Ramachar and some others playing crucial supporting roles for the entire duration of the process. Several CWC employees and Namma Bhoomi²⁶ students played important roles for short durations, for instance, the Namma Bhoomi Hospitality trainees prepared lunch for both days of the TOT programme. One employee worked exclusively on typing up the children's demands. Another documented the process.

Role of Resource Team members

The Panchayat Secretary/Clerk played an instrumental role as CWC's link to the other Panchayats. As they are well-connected and they frequently meet officers of other Panchayats, their inclusion in the team proved very productive.

CWC's Panchayat Level Coordinators were indispensable as lead facilitators and they guided the entire process with wholehearted commitment and excitement. One of their biggest challenges was to create an environment that was favourable to children's participation. Many of them had laid the foundations for child participation in the Toofan Panchayats after years of collaboration and negotiation with the community. Here, they had just a few days to make it happen!

The members of Bhima Sangha/Namma Sabha and the few college students within the team provided planning expertise, helped in forming and facilitating groups of school children and also provided logistical assistance. Being adolescents themselves, they were able to relate well with children and also inspired them with their own experiences in planning processes.

Challenges

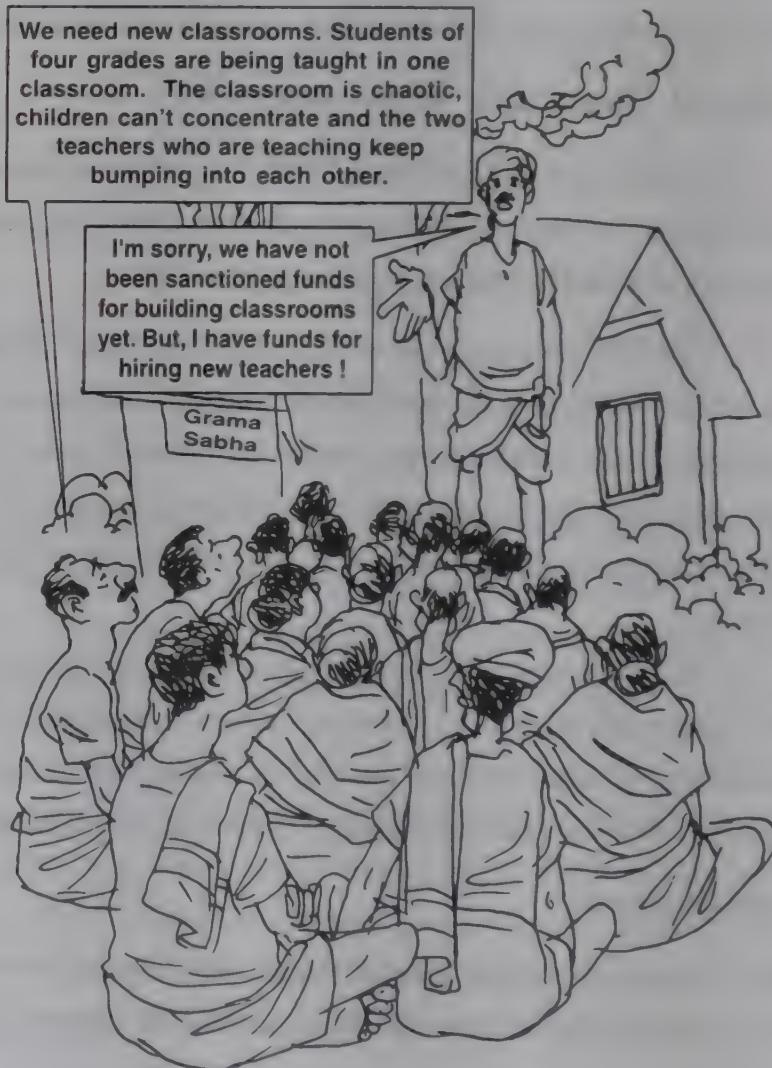
- A very unrealistic time schedule had been set out by the government for the entire process. In just about a month, from mid-June to mid-July, 49 Panchayats (the seven Toofan

²⁶ CWC's Regional Vocational Training Center in Kundapur, Karnataka



Panchayats had finished theirs) had to complete their plans. So CWC designed seven different teams and charted out a hectic but achievable timetable.

- Apathy and indifference was evident in some Panchayats as residents there viewed the planning process as a futile exercise. They felt that the final product would be tampered with anyway, at higher levels. If a senior-level CWC employee accompanied the Resource team, the special meeting for the adults became smoother as the member would handle tricky situations with ease. For instance, Ramachar, an ex-BEO (Block Education Officer), a high-ranking government officer, was well-known, making it a lot easier for the team to break the ice.
- The other challenge was the hostility and suspicion of some Panchayat members towards CWC for being the 'outsider', giving them suggestions on how to plan for their own Panchayat. Panchayat Presidents who were aware of CWC and Namma Bhoomi were more receptive to children's involvement. For instance, in Madamakhi Panchayat, the President had visited Namma Bhoomi and was quite impressed with the organisation, so he convinced the residents to take the team seriously.
- There were often questions about the need for children's participation, as it was considered impossible and/or wasteful. In some cases, adults felt that they knew the children's problems better than the children did.
- Lack of support from schoolteachers, who were either not willing to accept that children could make valuable contributions or felt that it



would be impossible to facilitate them was a serious hindrance in a few Panchayats. So when teachers were reluctant and cautious, the training programme's focus and strategy changed.

- Lack of true decentralisation due to constant interference by the bureaucracy and control by the upper two tiers of Panchayati Raj sometimes frustrated the Gram Sabha members and obstructed the Resource Team.
- In a few Panchayats, those who held power and tried to control the internal politics of Panchayats undermined the planning process. In these cases, a nodal government officer accompanied the team. This too had an enabling effect. Moreover, as the officer was currently in a position of power, every Panchayat secretary would go out of his/her way to provide support.

Children's exceptional contribution to the planning process

When CWC initiated this process, they were asked by others as to why children need 'politics'. It was a challenge for CWC to create spaces for children to gain recognition in and participate.

The children who took part in this process were mostly in the age group of 10 to 15 years. They viewed the process with a high degree of enthusiasm and sincerity. They are proud of what they have achieved for their communities. For first time children received a high degree of respect from adults. They have been very good role models for adults. In many cases, their presentations have motivated adults. Through their efforts they have used this 'political forum' to present their issues and they have become role models to practise true democracy.

Without children's participation, a handful of adults might have been able to understand the process and perhaps might even have been sensitive to children's needs. But with children's participation, a major change got underway. The problems, issues and solutions as seen from the children's perspective have now taken the center stage.

The process initially preferred by CWC, of involving both children and adults jointly in gathering problems and data, was replaced by 'children-only' groups, to prevent the usurping of the process by the adults. But in a few Panchayats, where the mixed teams did function fairly and democratically, the results were most spectacular, as in Hosangadi Panchayat.

Children's participation simplified the planning process, as participants had to get close to reality and communicate issues to the children. This simplification of a seemingly complex exercise like planning demystified the activity for adults as well. It drew in more adults to participate.

As many children belonged to the same communities, they were able to grasp the local situation very well.

Working with children demands that adults gain the skills and knowledge to transfer the information to children, and also to get involved with them. It is also an excellent learning process for adults – a challenge that can help equip them to participate. At times when adults do not comprehend something, they do not admit it. But children immediately, without inhibitions, admit not having understood something. It stimulated adults to gain more skills and knowledge, give them more clarity and brought them closer to reality.

Now the ground has been set to introduce permanent structures for participation of children in the 56 Panchayats.

Areas for improvement

The representatives of working and other marginalised children were part of the planning

process in the Toofan Panchayats. However, in the newly formed Panchayats the process was led by children from marginalized communities, but not working children. In the follow-up process, special efforts were made to include them.

The child participants did represent various backgrounds. However, they had not been elected through systematic and democratic processes.

The adults of a few Panchayats participated marginally. It is obvious that an environment that is not conducive to adult participation cannot encourage children to participate either. Only adults who question, challenge and consistently review their situation and are responsible for the development of healthy economic and social conditions can form the bedrock of a democratic system. If this system is not in place, child participation will never thrive.

The Way Ahead

The Government of Karnataka has now requested CWC to facilitate the planning process in other districts. So it has set up a State Resource Team comprised of representatives of Bhima Sangha, Makkala Panchayats, Panchayat members/Secretaries of the Toofan Panchayats, representatives of the CWC and a few committed individual. The team will facilitate and support other Panchayats that wish to carry out a similar participatory planning processes. The Training programme will emphasise on transferring the decision making power from a few authoritarian representatives of the Panchayat to the children, adults and other members of civil society.

Influencing policy

In the past, plans prepared at the Panchayat level were limited due to the scarcity of funds. But this time, the members have not let budgets constrain them. For the first time, they have presented a vision for their Panchayats and identified what is needed. These plans can be used to inform, influence and pressurise the government to meet the Panchayat's requirements.

Earlier, if a Panchayat put forth a demand for an Anganwadi at the Taluk or the District level, the standard reply used to be that the government had already met its quota of sanctioning an Angadwadi for every population of 1000 persons. But in these plans, the request for an Anganwadi is clearly accompanied by the reason for the demand, the number of children presently not accessing an Anganwadi, the impact it will have on the families of the children, the communities they belonged to and how the lack of the Anganwadi affects the overall development of the Panchayat. It also informs the decision and policy makers about how they needed to view each issue in a holistic manner to respond to the needs of the communities.

When the plans that have been prepared as an outcome of this process get sanctioned, their implementation will have to be monitored and evaluated at each Panchayat. Meanwhile, these plans have to be used as tools for advocacy and lobbying. These plans can also be used as foundations for future planning. Some of the data, such as the history of the area and the root causes of problems listed do not require frequent updation.

Government support

To support the process, the Panchayat structure needs to be further strengthened. The Panchayat department has conducted training programmes related to planning but after six months the next set of members should also be equipped. Official members of both, the Gram Panchayat and the Taluk Panchayat, such as the Secretary and Clerk, require inputs.

Information collected through the planning process should be consolidated. A Task Force should be set up in each Panchayat, to ensure the participation of the people, and also so that they can update the data and plan ahead. The Taluk and District Level governments should recognise and equip themselves to implement a similar planning process.

Often, democracy is understood within a very narrow frame. In the name of democracy, the decisions of a small number of people are thrust on the majority. This planning process teaches us to recognise the changes required in the democratic system and to respond to them.

Challenge to globalisation

Such exercises are also a challenge to globalisation that requires centralised set-ups but decentralised implementation. Currently, the system of governance functions on the premise of centralised decision-making, with the local governments functioning like local agencies to implement the decisions.

The Panchayats can mobilise their constituencies to discuss issues in depth, build on experiences and challenge globalisation through creative and powerful governance structures. Panchayats that are enabled by people-centered processes can question and challenge centralised decisions. They can take positions and decisions as true representatives of the people, with the capability to analyse what information and resources they have and what they need to strengthen the fabric of their societies.

Conclusion

For the first time in India, children's inputs have been sought for inclusion in the long-term developmental plan of their region. It is the first step in the long journey towards setting up a structure to formalise and institutionalise children's participation in decision-making processes that affect them. This journey is tough and full of hurdles. It demands of children tremendous courage, confidence and understanding of the ways of adults. It demands of adults a change in the way they view children and a readiness and sensitivity to work with them. It also requires adults, majority of whom are disempowered, to be emboldened enough to demand the fulfillment of their requirements. It needs accountability from a government that seems to have forgotten who it is really representing.

Only when children and adults are empowered can children be facilitated to claim what is rightfully theirs - their right to protection, their right to provision of basic services, education and health and their right to participate in the civil society.

The Process

History is made

July 24, 2004: Hosangadi Panchayat²⁷ is abuzz with activity. It is the day of their first Gram Sabha for the year, called to winnow the Panchayat's five-year plan. It is also a democratic milestone, for children have been invited by the Karnataka State government to moot ideas that would eventually be the building blocks of state and national plans.

The meeting begins with a reading of accounts - sources of income and expenditure. Then, came the watershed event. A 12-year-old girl walks up to the podium, with a clutch of papers in her trembling hands. Nervously she read out a list of demands that she, her classmates and friends from other schools had compiled a month earlier.

Her demands? Compound walls for schools and footbridges to ease the way for school-goers! But that was not all. She also highlighted problems that plagued the community, mainly relating to water, fuel and roads. Each demand is fringed with the reasons for the demand and the benefits that would accrue with their fulfillment.

Hosangadi Panchayat is not unique. 55 such Panchayats have paved the way for children's participation.

The Beginnings - an invitation

Over the years, CWC has attempted to involve children and other marginalized groups in the planning process, but has always faced opposition at every turn. To overcome the opposition, CWC has made special efforts to encourage and enhance the aspiration to freedom, and tries to suggest creative methods to empower children and their communities to play an active role in creating a child-centered, equitable society.



²⁷ Hosangadi Panchayat is one of the 56 Panchayats that constitute Kundapur Taluk, Udupi District, Karnataka. See Annexure 1 for a complete list of all 56 Panchayats.

This exciting new opportunity to initiate a participatory planning process at the grassroots level presented itself to CWC at the Taluk level Task Force held in February, 2004, at Kundapur, Karnataka. Damodar Acharya, Executive Director, CWC, invited the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Zilla Parishad (District Panchayat), Mr Sundar Naik, to attend this meeting. Mr. Naik had looked in on Keradi Panchayat and was impressed by Bhima Sangha's and Makkala Panchayat's achievements. His interest in CWC's activities and his obligation to fulfil his ex-officio duties brought him to the Task Force meeting.

Makkala Panchayats and the Task Force: An Introduction Box 2

The Makkala Panchayats are a parallel government of children that work closely with the Panchayats. They were set up in Karnataka in 1995, as a pilot project, by Bhima Sangha and CWC, in collaboration with the Ministry of Rural Development and Panchayat Raj. They have been acclaimed both nationally and internationally as extremely successful models.

The Makkala Panchayats are forums for village children to participate in the process of decision-making. Currently they are functioning in eight Panchayats of Karnataka where the Rural Programme of the Concerned for Working Children is being implemented.

The members of the Makkala Panchayat, aged 12 to 17 years, are elected by village children aged 6 to 18 years. There is a representative for every ward. Makkala Panchayats have a two-layered reservation system. There is one for working children, school-goers and those with disabilities. There is a second quota based on gender and caste that have been formed by the children's analysis of the marginalisation and distribution of children in their Panchayats.

The Makkala Panchayats have given a new lease of life to the Panchayats. They are positioned to link the children with the local self-government structures. They formally interact with the members of the village Panchayats through the Task Forces set up in each of the Panchayats.

The Task Force is a tripartite body composed of child representatives, government officials, community members and businessmen/employers facilitated by CWC. It is a two-tiered body, present both at the Panchayat and at the Taluk level. The President of the Gram Sabha is the President of the Panchayat Level Task Force while the District Minister is the President of the Taluk Level Task Force. At present, the Task Force is functioning in eight Panchayats, while the Taluk level Task Force is working in Kundapur.

The Task Force Meeting - A Prelude

At the Task Force meeting, children from five Panchayats presented demands based on an updated socio-economic survey of their areas, first drawn up in 1998. Every demand they presented was bolstered with facts and figures.

The important issues raised were related to drinking water and drainage, education, alcohol abuse and scarcity of fish in the sea due to pollution and prawn culture. The presentation was made through such winning techniques as role-plays, folk dances, and skits.

A visibly enthused CEO immediately asked CWC to assist in the survey process in the seven Toofan Panchayats and arm all the Panchayat members with data to build up the planning process.

Planning for a better future

To improve their data bank and information sources, Panchayat members were trained in conducting surveys of their Panchayats by Bhima Sangha and CWC members, who had the experience of surveying the Toofan Panchayats. The training session took place in January 2004 at the Abdul Nazir Sab Institute of Rural development (ANSSIRD) through satellite broadcasting.

The CEO wanted CWC and Bhima Sangha members to survey the entire Taluk, which it declined, while agreeing to contribute only to the seven Panchayats in Kundapur that it worked in.

Meanwhile, Damodar Acharya met the Executive Officer (EO)²⁸ of Kundapur Taluk and put forward the idea of greater children's participation in the five-year plans. Initially the EO was hesitant about the idea, his main concern being that the deadline seemed too close for the children. But Damodar was persistent and won him over with data the children had gathered, impressing him with evidence of their thorough approach in data gathering, the number of indicators drawn up and the fact that it was regularly updated.

A second meeting of all the official and non-official parties was called by the CEO at Namma Bhoomi, which provided a platform to both children and adult members of the Toofan Panchayats to present their demands to the District Planning Officer (DPO)²⁹. In their presentation, the children of each Panchayat reeled off detailed statistics and enunciated forceful presentations on issues that affected the entire community.

²⁸ The Executive Officer is the State government appointed administrative head of a Taluk Panchayat.

²⁹ The District Planning Officer, also called the Chief Accounts Officer, advises the District Panchayat in matters of financial policy and is responsible for all matters relating to the accounts of the District Panchayat including the preparation of the annual accounts and budget.

Dazzled, the DPO promised the Panchayats immediate funds. The CEO ordered the DPO to ensure that Makkala Panchayat and Bhima Sangha got involved in planning. Alur Panchayat and the Makkala Panchayat would be the first to complete the planning process, it was decided.

An ideal plan

The final five-year plan, titled 'NANNA KANASINA ALUR' (MY DREAM ALUR) was completed after consultation with all sections of the community, including women, the poor and the marginalized in Alur Panchayat. It provided information on the history of the area as well as occupations, geographical features and important statistics. Several maps pictorially represented information on features such as the distribution of essential services, location of schools, hospitals and Anganwadis, which could immediately highlight which areas were underdeveloped and needed more attention.

A week later, the plan was presented to the DPO, who was so impressed that he asked the six other Panchayats to chalk out a similar plan.

The Alur plan was hailed as an ideal, rich source of information on the Panchayat's unique social, economic, cultural and political assets and needs. Being a public document, it was informative and could be read by all against a local historical perspective. It could guide the Taluk and District authorities to identify beneficiaries of the various government schemes on offer. For example, if an association of young artisans was trying to revive dying traditional crafts, the authorities could redirect government funds to support it.

Expanding operations

"The planning process should start from the bottom and not from the top. Till now what used to happen was that everything used to come from the top. Now it is going to be changed."

- Sundar Naik, CEO, Zilla Parishad, Udupi Panchayat in an interview dated 18th June, 2004

When CWC was asked to simulate the process in other areas, it was given an ideal opportunity to expand its area of operations dramatically and work towards creating structures for children to participate in Kundapur Taluk and eventually Udupi District. It was a golden opportunity for CWC to reap the rewards of its two-decade attempts to involve children in governance.

However, it was also a major challenge for CWC because it was entering into regions where it had not set up structures or nurtured relationships with the communities as it had done so painstakingly at Kundapur.

The Final Product

Box 3

The main sections of the Alur Plan, which the CEO later adopted as the framework for the plans of all the other Panchayats, are:

- History of the Panchayat
- Physical and Topographical features
- Population Statistics
- Literacy Statistics
- Infrastructural statistics - number of houses with direct access to water, electricity, toilets, roads, irrigation facilities, street lights
- Alternative energy sources such as solar energy, gobar gas
- Locational Information - neighbouring Panchayats
- Information on weather conditions and temperature
- Water resources
- Incidence of drought
- Rainfall trends and pattern
- Land use pattern
- Condition of soil
- Flora and fauna
- Social structure - main communities, castes
- Primary occupations - description, percentage of employment
- Estimated Expenditure of one family on basic amenities
- Education statistics
- Sources of funds of the 9th five year plan
- Sources of funds of the 10th five year plan
- Profile of Agricultural activities - main crops grown
- Livestock statistics
- Fisheries
- Forestry
- Fuel
- Industries
- Programmes towards eradicating poverty
- Road transportation and communication
- Description of the daily/weekly/monthly markets held
- Drinking facilities
- Health facilities
- Cultural activities
- Beneficiaries of government schemes
- Social welfare activities
- Statistics of children and people with disabilities
- The Panchayat's plan of development for the next five years

One step at a time

As a first step towards this Herculean task, CWC conducted a two-day Training of Trainers (TOT) workshop for its field staff, Bhima Sangha, Makkala Panchayat members, and the seven Toofan Panchayat Secretaries and Clerks. The aim was to empower this diverse group of people to conduct training on planning for schoolchildren and adults in the 49 Panchayats of the Taluk.

CWC had to decide on the number and type of children they wanted to reach through their planning exercise. So far, CWC's primary focus had been working children, the most marginalised and disempowered group.

But as working children were at their workplaces for large parts of the day, and CWC had only a month, with limited staff, to achieve the task, the senior level management decided to involve only schoolchildren, a captive and easily accessible group. Gopal Shetty, a Taluk level Coordinator, Block Resource Center (BRC), who is a nodal officer of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan³⁰, was asked to monitor the process. Headmasters of all the government schools in the Taluk were instructed to grant the children a day off to attend the session.

College students from the Kundapur area, were invited by CWC to Namma Bhoomi to participate in the process. About 10 committed students from different areas attended.

The Training of Trainers (TOT) Programme

The TOT was designed to communicate the importance of the five-year planning process, how the current plan is different and how it would encompass the needs of everyone, including women and children.

The Panchayat Secretary was thought to be a nodal member who could bring the advantage of his good connections with him, so as to pave the way for:

- a. The Panchayat to accept the process, which was a shift from previous planning exercises.
- b. CWC to facilitate the participation of schoolchildren without too much resistance.

Panchayat Clerks were involved as they have been doing all the paperwork for the Panchayat plans and possess comprehensive knowledge of the socio-economic and political milieu of the area.

A group of 35 persons of different ages and places but with some experience in common constituted the core group of the TOT programme. All these people were well-versed with the five-

³⁰ Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is the Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UOE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right.

year planning process as they all had played different roles in the framing of their five-year plans in their Panchayats in the past few weeks. They were also familiar with the idea and facilitation of child participation and in different degrees believed in its importance and purpose.

Damodar Acharya and Venkatesh Mudkeri, Rural Field Programme Coordinator, were the lead facilitators.

On the first day the group was introduced to the purpose and rationale of the five year plan and the economic, social, political, cultural, environmental and spiritual domains for planning.

Damodar detailed two challenges for the Resource teams. The first challenge, he said, lay in ensuring a participatory environment. The second one was facilitating access to requisite information. Communities which would receive training in the following days should get sensitized as to why concerns of marginalised sections relating to protection, participation and provision of services should be prioritized.

The second day had Venkatesh describing the Alur five-year plan, its highlights, the manner in which the resource teams should train children to collect the data, the format they should present it in and the difficulties they might encounter.

Apprehensions

Throughout the two-day programme, many concerns were aired by the group regarding the feasibility of child participation in areas where the Makkala Panchayat did not exist. Cynical comments were thrown up by some Secretaries on the redundancy of such plans, which they felt was a useless and time-consuming exercise that did not result in more than a slight, at times superficial improvement. Frustration with the limiting and incomplete degree of decentralisation at the Panchayat level was evident. Apprehensions were expressed about the tight schedule for the training programme and the too small teams.

The CWC team counter-argued that once the five-year plan received approval by the District Planning Committee, it became an official document for the entire Panchayat with which to hold the government accountable. Also, as the plan would be prepared to give it the depth and detail of the Alur Plan it would be impossible for the government to doctor it. As all sections of the community were participants, it would be difficult for the government to absolve itself of its responsibility on flimsy grounds, as that would have the entire community up in arms.

"The Alur Plan is easy to understand. Without visiting the place, you can visualise it."

"We usually call 1-2 people to the ward meeting. Instead, we should gather all women and children and call for the meeting."

"The plan might change from Panchayat to Panchayat, but the process should remain the same."

- Sundar Naik, CEO, Udupi Zilla Parishad

Designing the process

Now began the hard work of brainstorming. Discussions were held on how CWC was going to stir up enthusiasm in 49 Panchayats for an exercise that had previously attracted little interest. The seven CWC Panchayat Level Co-ordinators (PLCs), part of the seven teams, designed an interactive, fun-filled, and informative input session for the children's training programme. Venkatesh, along with his team, included the following components:

1. A sing-along song
2. A round of introductions
3. Story of Kamakshi and the King³¹
4. Introduction to the five-year plan and its relevance to the Panchayat
5. Discussions on the manner and reasons for children's participation
6. Examples of the concerns that could be addressed and the information required to support demands.
7. Ward-wise groups of children would be facilitated by the Resource team to discuss issues. One child from the group would be asked to volunteer to document the concerns raised.
8. Publicity for 1098, Makkala Sahaya Vani (Children's Help Line).

Six charts would be employed by the resource team to convey information in a lucid and interesting manner. (See Annexure 3 for the charts)

Each ward-wise group of children would be provided with a booklet of 10 pages that have the following three columns:

Ward 1		
The Problem	The Situation	The Suggested Solution

³¹ Contact CWC for the entire text of the story

The process described above had evolved from a tiresome, frustrating but enlightening trial and error exercise the team had undertaken with the first batch of Panchayats. It appeared to be the best process to rope in children.

Initially, the strategy was to form mixed teams of adults and children who would gather data and interact with the residents. However, CWC found that adults, unused to the idea of child participation, appeared to gradually take over the reins of control and relegate children in the team to mere observers. The children too hesitated to assert their rights, as it was a strange concept for them. In some Panchayats, adults even wrote down what they thought were children's concerns in the name of children!

In Basrur Panchayat, both children and adults assiduously gathered data and jotted down problems, but it was noted later that the issues listed were adult-related only. So even though children were a part of the team, they were sidelined, while the final outcome was shaped and defined by the opinions, feelings and sentiments of adults.

Thus, after the disastrous results of the initial process in the first few Panchayats, the CWC team decided to rework its strategy and form separate teams of adults and children. But even this exercise posed challenges as many schoolteachers were reluctant to send children unaccompanied to collect data, moreover, they were unwilling to even support them due to their

own pressures of completing the government prescribed school syllabus on time.

Yet, in other Panchayats, teachers proved to be important catalysts in mobilizing children. In Vandse Panchayat, teachers assisted the Resource team in maintaining discipline among large groups of children in the 10 to 11-year age group. They also helped to form ward-wise groups of children. But as most schoolteachers were opposed to the idea of children venturing outdoors during school hours, the children wrote out their problems in school.

Addressing the adults - Vishesh Sabha (Special Meeting)

CWC helped to strengthen the cause of participatory governance further by convening a Vishesh Sabha at every Panchayat, intended to encourage adults to get involved and spread awareness. Adults were advised to form ward-wise groups for data collection.

Hence, meetings of the most representative adults of the community, including women's self-help groups, youth organisations, school teachers, Anganwadi workers, farmers, landowners, traders, and other influential individuals were called in every Panchayat. The five-year plan was explained with examples of CWC's earlier attempts in order to energise the community, especially children, to demand accountability and transparency.

This process has proved that a consultative process, with maximum inputs from the maximum number of people, is exemplary, its output incontestable.

Annexure 1
List of Panchayats in Kundapur Taluk

Sl.	Panchayat	Villages in Panchayat
1	Ajri	Ajri, Kudladi
2	Alur	Alur, Harkur
3	Amasyabailu	Amasyabailu, Ratadi, Muchatu
4	Amparu	Amparu
5	Anagalli	Anagalli
6	Balkur	Balkur
7	Basrur	Basrur
8	Beluru	Beluru
9	Belve	Belve, Albadi (4)
10	Bijadi	Bijadi, Gopadi
11	Bijur	Bijur
12	Byandoor	Byandoor, Targase
13	Chitoor	Chitoor, Idurukunhadi, Hosooru
14	Gangoli	Gangoli
15	Golihole	Golihole, Yelajith
16	Gujadi	Gujadi
17	Hakladi	Hakladi, Kundabarandadi, Nuchadi
18	Haladi	Haladi (76), Haladi (28)
19	Halihole	Halihole, Kamalashile
20	Hangloor	Hangloor
21	Hardali - Mandadi	Hardali-Mandadi, Haladi-Harkadi
22	Hattiangadi	Hattiangadi, Kanyana, Kenchanoru
23	Hemmadi	Hemmadi, Katbeltur, Devalakunda
24	Hengavalli	Hengavalli
25	Heruru	Heruru, Ulluru (11)
26	Hombadi Mandadi	Hombadi Mandadi, Yadyadi Matyadi, Japthi
27	Hosangadi	Hosangadi, Yedamoga

28	Jadkal	Jadkal, Mudduru
29	Kambadkone	Kadambakone, Heranjalu
30	Kalavara	Kalavara, Vakwadi, Korgi, Haskaturu, Asodu
31	Keduru	Keduru, Ulturu
32	Kalthod	Kalthod
33	Kavradi	Kavradi, Halnadu
34	Keradi	Keradi, Bellal
35	Kergal	Kergal, Nandanavana
36	Kirimunjeshwara	Kirimunjeshwara
37	Kollur	Kollur
38	Koni	Koni, Kandavara
39	Koteshwara	Koteshwara
40	Kumbashi	Kumbashi
41	Kurkunje	Kurkunje, Gulvadi
42	Madamakhi	Madamakhi, Shedimane
43	Marwanthe	Marwanthe
44	Monehalli	Monehalli
45	Nada	Nada, Hadavu, Senapura, Barthakere
46	Navunda	Navunda
47	Paduvari	Paduvari
48	Shankamarayana	Shankamarayana, Kulanche
49	Shirur	Shirur
50	Siddhapura	Siddhapura, Ulluru (74)
51	Tallur	Tallur, Uppinakudru
52	Tekatte	Tekatte
53	Trasi	Trasi, Hosadu
54	Uppunda	Uppunda
55	Vandse	Vandse
56	Yadtore	Yadtore

Annexure 2

Resource Team participants

Panchayat Participants

1. Chandrashekhar, Secretary, Alur Panchayat
2. B. Gopal, Secretary, Belve Panchayat
3. Panduranga Shet, Secretary, Balkur Panchayat
4. N.R. Langoti, Secretary, Uppunda Panchayat
5. Chandra Belve, Secretary, Hattiangadi Panchayat
6. Goapl, Clerk, Hallilhole Panchayat
7. Udaya, Bill Collector, Hattiangadi Panchayat
8. Ashok Shetty, Clerk, Mada Makhi Panchayat

Namma Sabha Participants

1. Sashikala, Alur
2. Parvathi, Uppunda
3. Srimati, Alur
4. Nagaratna, Uppunda
5. Sugandhi, Keradi

Bhima Sangha Participants

1. Rupa
2. Lata
3. Pratima

CWC Participants

1. Damodar Acharya
2. Venkatesh Mudkeri
3. Ananth Naik
4. Neela Ramanagowda
5. Usha Hebbar
6. Yashoda B. Shetty
7. Arunachal Nayak
8. Jayashekhar Madapadi
9. Ramachar
10. Umesh Hegde

Nodal Officers

1. B Gopal Shetty, B.R.C. Co-ordinator
2. B.H. Manjunath, Labour Inspector

Annexure 3

Chart - 1

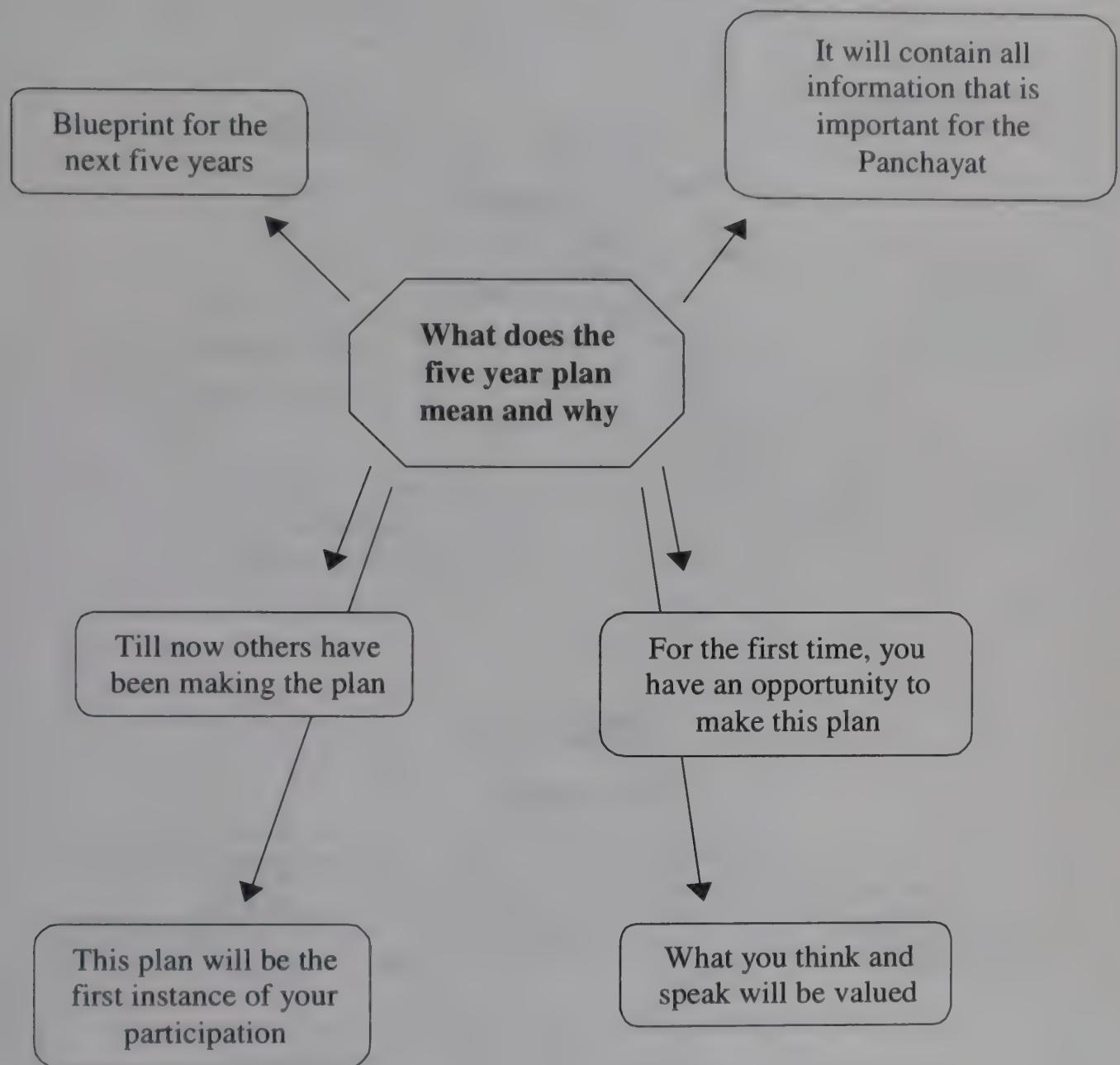


Chart - 2

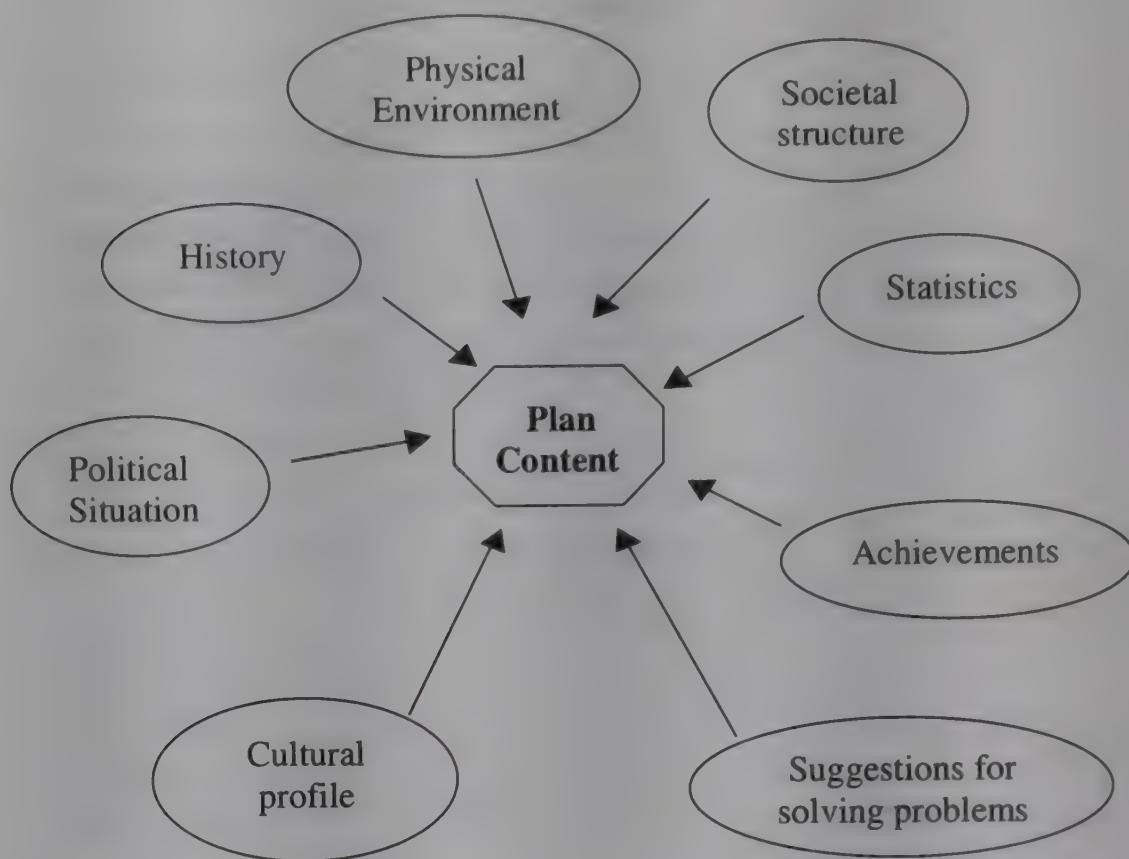


Chart - 3

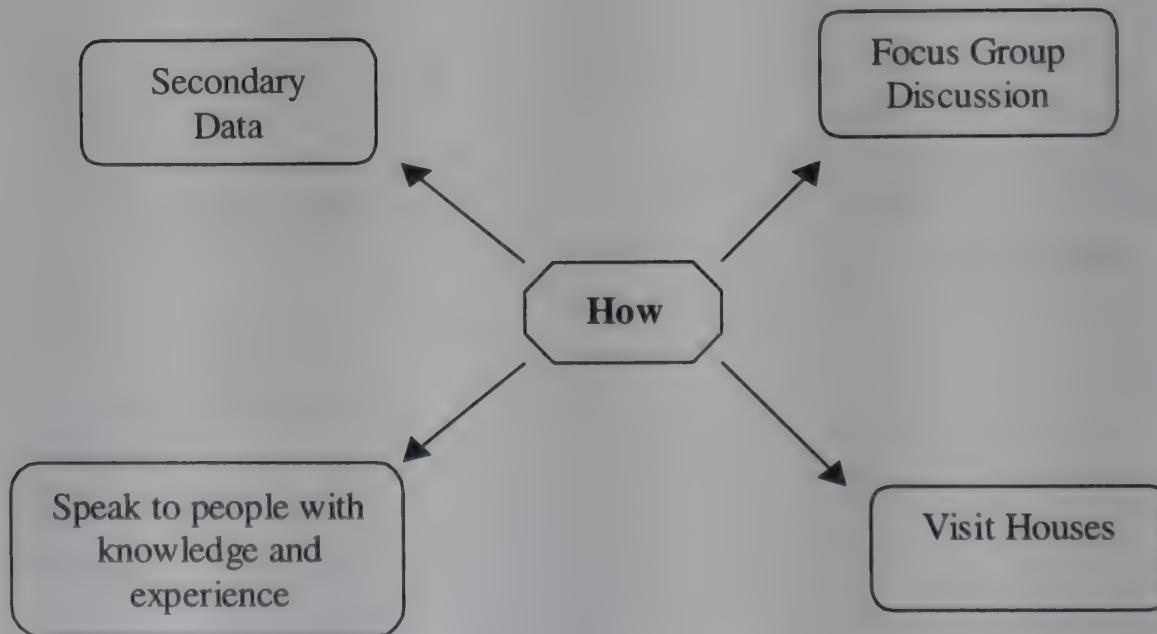


Chart - 4

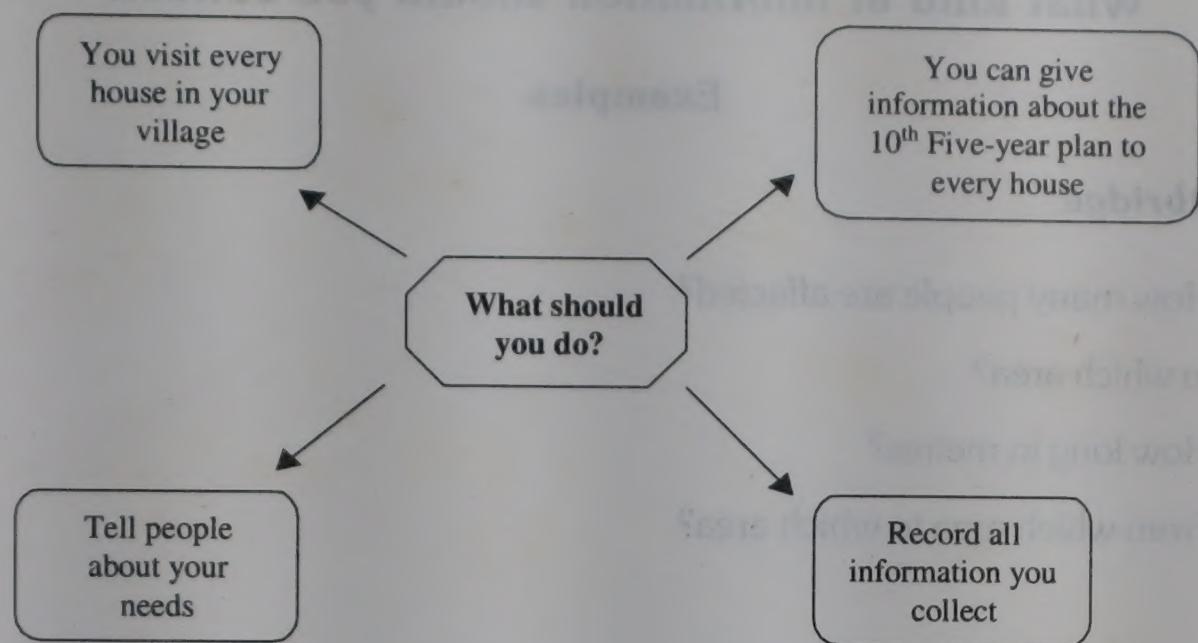


Chart - 5

Format for Problem Collection		
The Problem	The situation	The suggested solution

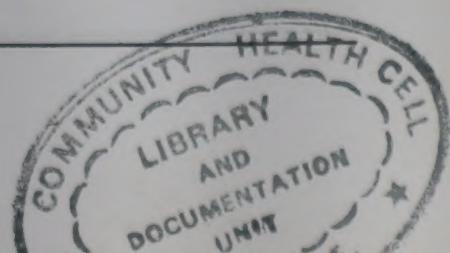


Chart - 6

What kind of information should you collect?

Examples

Footbridge

- How many people are affected?
- In which area?
- How long in metres?
- From which area to which area?

Drinking water

- How many families are affected?
- In which area?
- What is the current source of drinking water?
- How many months is there lack of drinking water?



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